

Town of Kennebunkport
Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee
Kennebunkport Village Fire Station
Monday, July 17th, 2017
6:30 PM Meeting Agenda

A Goose Rocks Beach Advisory Committee meeting was held on Monday, July 17, 2017. The meeting convened at 6:30 p.m. in the Kennebunkport Village Fire Station.

Members Present: Richard Driver, Kate Bauer Burke, Russ Gorney, Joanne Gustin, Bob Sherman, Bill Nixon, Mike Weston
Others Present: Ms. Laurie Smith, Town Manager, Werner Gilliam, Director of Planning & Development

1. Call to Order

Mr. Driver called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 15, 2017 meeting were approved unanimously. Approval of the minutes from the June 29, 2017 meeting was deferred until the next meeting.

3. Public Comments on matters not included on agenda

There were no comments at that time.

4. Other New Business

There were no new items of business to be discussed at this time.

5. Presentation on Proposed FEMA Flood Maps

Mr. Werner Gilliam addressed the Committee members and the audience in attendance and presented a detailed PowerPoint presentation entitled “*Flood maps and Goose Rocks: Past, Present, Future*”. Mr. Gilliam briefly spoke about the history of flood mapping and construction requirements and explained the purpose of flood maps is to identify areas prone to flooding to establish flood insurance rates and assist communities in their efforts to promote sound floodplain management. Some of the items Mr. Gilliam presented were as follows:

- The old flood maps were never intended to work with new GIS maps
- Old paper maps were drawn using USGS
- Elevations on new GIS maps are significantly more accurate than paper maps
- Different zone types have been established such as VE (wave height of ≥ 3 feet), Coastal AE (wave height of 3.1-1.5 feet), AE (wave height of ≤ 1.5)
- Showed comparison of flood maps of coastal Kennebunkport from 2009, 2013 and 2017
- 2013 maps show a dramatic increase in elevations greater than 9; but velocity zones did not change that much
- 2017 maps, elevations again increased most noticeably on the back side of the marsh or interior portions of Goose Rocks Beach
- Number of parcels affect in Kennebunkport by new flood maps have increased from current maps of 205 parcels to 655 parcels with new 2017 maps.

Mr. Gilliam further explained that all of this information translates to is possible increased insurance costs related to elevation.

Mr. Weston asked how the elevation is calculated. Mr. Gilliam responded this is where an elevation certificate is important adding that Nate Dill from Ransom Environmental can explain the methodology behind what the actual elevations mean.

Mr. Sherman and Mr. Weston asked if the elevations were bases on rising water or wind driven water and asked how the velocity zone was calculated. Mr. Gilliam replied there is a model of the elevations that includes wind speed and suggested Mr. Dill again explain the methodology.

Going forward, Mr. Gilliam explained the Board of Selectmen authorized the staff to pursue a technical appeal fo the Preliminary Maps along with Ransom Environmental. This is hoping to be a coordinated appeal with communities from York and Cumberland Counties which involves developing a revised total water level and incident wave conditions utilizing data form the recently completed North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Gilliam added Phase II of the Appeal would include recalculating up to seven priority transects using the data which have been identified as higher priority. Once FEMA sets the Appeal period, the town will have 90 days to put the appeal together. Mr. Gilliam added the new maps would be deemed final sometime in January 2018.

Mr. Gilliam concluded many folks assume the maps are a choice of the community but actually if the town does not accept the maps it could lose any subsidies available and could lose out on the National Flood Insurance Program.

Mr. Driver introduced Nate Dill of Ransom Environmental and asked if the elevations on the maps were set using the water level in a 100-year storm. Mr. Dill agreed with Mr. Driver's statement adding the basis of a 100-year water level means in any year there is a 1% chance it will exceed that level and is an estimate of the crest of the waves during that storm.

Mr. Dill gave a detailed presentation outlining the deficiencies of the mapping process entitled "2017 Preliminary FEMA Flood Maps York and Cumberland Counties, Maine, Appeal Strategy Meeting". Mr. Dill showed several slides explaining all of the technical calculations used to determine elevations relating to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988. The mean sea level is a long-term average used to measure water level of all the tides, Mr. Dill explained.

Mr. Dill also gave a detailed explanation of wave setup as a simplification of the methodology used to determine additional increase of the mean water level and its relationship to wave radiation stress and rip currents. This aids in determining the total wave crest elevation.

In a brief technical discussion, Mr. Dill explained the methodology that FEMA has used to determine wave height and flood zones is too simple for Kennebunkport; especially for those areas behind a significantly sheltered area like Goose Rocks Beach.

Mr. Nixon asked how confident is the town that the appeal will be successful. Mr. Gill replied he is fairly confident explaining they need to prove two things: first establish the claim that the maps are either scientifically or technically incorrect and second is to demonstrate that the scientific correctness will result in a change.

Mr. Dill offered his opinion that the new calculations could be completed within the 90-day appeal period but added that this type of modeling is very expensive and complicated. Mr. Driver added the town has already committed to spend \$85,000 on the appeal process with the Board of Selectmen voting to approve the expenditure at their last meeting.

Ms. Burke asked if the town won the appeal would it stop the new maps from being effective? Mr. Dill replied winning the appeal would delay the effective maps by a whole year.

An audience member asked if the appeal was successful would the town reduce some of the property assessments. Mr. Dill referenced a publication from a few years ago that stated those properties that were in the 100-year flood zone were 7.8% less than those out of the zone.

Mr. Dill also pointed out that the appeal strategy is not an economical one for only one community adding that the new model development is best for multiple communities. The whole point is to get FEMA to accept that new methodology, Mr. Dill concluded.

Mr. Driver introduced Danny Edgcomb of Kennebunk Insurance Company who gave a brief presentation on flood insurance rates and how the new maps could cause and increase in insurance premiums. Mr. Edgcomb suggested homeowners obtain a flood elevation certificate and stated they cost approximately \$350. Mr. Edgcomb also stated that anyone can purchase flood insurance even if they are not in a flood zone.

Ms. Smith and Mr. Driver thanked all of tonight's speakers for coming and sharing this important information

6. Continuation of Public Comments

Mr. Nixon thanked Carol Sherman for her excellent reports on the piping plovers and least terns and reminded attendees that beachgoers should avoid flying kites near nesting areas and should dispose of litter properly so as not to attract skunks and raccoons to the beach where they may prey on birds' nests and eggs.

7. Date for next meeting

The Committee members agreed to hold the next meeting at a date to be determined in August at the Goose Rocks Beach Firehouse. Immediately following that meeting there will be a presentation on the history of the Great Wildfire of 1947

8. Adjourn